I’ve Got You Under My Skin

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I’ve Got You Under My Skin

by orphan_account

Summary

When on one summer day in 1963, an elegant man in his forties emerges on a porch belonging to the Graham family and announces his willingness to rent one of their rooms, he seems almost as a savior who comes at the very last moment only to rescue the Grahams from various debts. However, they don’t expect themselves to start suspecting this mysterious man whose true intentions appear to be nothing as the ones stated at the beginning, as it eventually turns out that he has taken interest of ambiguous nature in Mrs. Graham’s only child—a sixteen-year-old Will.

Notes

It started as my self indulgent work after I was searching for something Lolita inspired in this fandom and couldn’t find anything satisfying (except for My Sin My Soul by incredible *whiskeyandspite*). But then I thought—why not publish it? So here it is, something inspired by Lolita and many, many different kind of movies and books I’ve seen and read in my life. The titles for each chapter and for the whole work are taken from Frank Sinatra’s songs because if there is anything in this world I love wholeheartedly, then it’s definitely his music.

Hannibal doesn’t make spontaneous and thoughtless decisions.

And while he was heading off to Baltimore, at first the idea of drinking a cup of coffee at a suburban restaurant didn’t appeal to him at all, though his desire to have one after three days spent in a hotel where this beverage was simply undrinkable compelled him to pull off the road to whichever restaurant he noticed first.

He takes a sip of highly diluted brown liquid that supposed to be the coffee he longed for so enormously and winces imperceptibly, feeling the sharp and sour taste diffusing on his tongue. He glances at his distorted reflection on the fluid’s surface and puts a small white cup back on a saucer, realizing that his decision indeed wasn’t very wise. Of course he could visit some prestigious Italian café, there must be at least one in Philadelphia, but he wanted to leave this atrocious and overpopulated city as soon as possible. At the thought of the purpose of his journey there he winces subtly once again and reaches for the newspaper placed next to the cup. Pretending to read seems to be the only way to occupy his mind with something of less bothersome nature.

The annual psychiatrists meetings in Philadelphia aren’t valueless whatsoever, and even though Hannibal finds them rather unnecessary and insufficient, he still attends every single one, mainly to stay in friendly terms with the renowned psychiatric community. And yet, said community seems to be the only reason why Hannibal almost always leaves those meetings internally exasperated. While small and indeed meaningless conversations he makes with fellow doctors don’t irritate him at all, it is rude people he despises the most. And as he always has a witty and trenchant response to them, for some time already he has find himself simply bored with the entire activity. Even belittling Frederick Chilton hadn't brought him as much enjoyment as it used to.

Time passes and Hannibal, despite the increasing sense of discomfort, doesn’t consider leaving this abominable restaurant, delaying his departure only to savor the thought of still being at least hundred miles away from the revulsive city he lives in. He has never found himself hating Baltimore but neither he is fond of it—it just happens to be one of the many cities he’s stayed in, only recently he started feeling a strong surge of disdain to its ordinariness.

The words before him don’t make much sense since he doesn’t even try to focus on reading, the newspaper serving the sole purpose of separating him from the rest of his surroundings as he and his mind travel to Italy, to his beloved Florence he misses enormously.

He immediately finds himself at Galeria Uffizi, where, while still young, he practiced sketching and reproduced many of exhibited artworks, the most remarkable one undoubtedly being Caravaggio’s Boy with a Basket of Fruit. He shivers slightly at the very thought of one of the most impeccable art pieces he has ever seen. He still can unerringly recall this painting from his memory, and while some may mainly focus on the finely detailed fruits, Hannibal has always caught himself at paying his attention only to the boy holding them gracefully. His skin sun-kissed, cheeks tinted with soft pink, lips red and plumpy, and slightly agape, nose tiny and adorable, eyes black as glistening obsidian, hair dark and curly, and untamed yet immaculately composing with his face. And with his facial features revealing the

blissfulness he is experiencing just by posing to the greatest of masters, with the strong but still delicate neck muscles, with the pristine cloth contrasting with the black background, there he is—the true definition of beauty and youthfulness, and that artwork being the only accurate depiction of it.

Hannibal is at least displeased when he realizes that his journey doesn't last as long as he wishes—he hears something clattering and then notices shattered porcelain, dark liquid spilled underneath its pieces after a cup of what seems to be tea fell down from the waitress' tray. Nevertheless, he considers himself a gentleman, so he pulls out a napkin from the napkin holder placed on his table and, handing it to the woman, he finds her already gone. It's almost an unwitting movement as he shifts his hand towards presumably the second participant of this humiliating accident. When he lifts his eyes to regard this person and favor them with a charming smile, he finds himself holding his breath in a daze instead.

Had Hannibal not been a narcissist, he would be rather humble about his knowledge of artistry in its many forms. But since he never experienced the real definition of modesty and has always been sincere with himself, he always considered himself the true connoisseur of said art. And yet, standing beside his very own table, there is a creature so exquisite he has never even imagined something as astounding may exist—something even more marvelous than the Caravaggio's Boy.

Its dark brown and soft looking curls, that once must have been a part of a very neat and sleek hairstyle, are now uncontrollably escaping it, unruly on the dewy forehead. With the straight and slightly upturned nose, rosy velvet lips and rufescent cheeks its pale, almost cherubic face looks truly captivating and Hannibal has to prevent himself not to sigh deeply which might otherwise betray his transfixion with the sublimity he is experiencing.

The creature seemingly happens to be a young boy, very likely to still attend a school of some sorts, and his uniform, now stained with dark liquid, appears to confirm that. He isn't very tall, maybe something around five feet and seven inches in his school shoes, and down the hem of his knee length black slacks Hannibal can admire the rest of his pale legs, almost hairless and beautifully exposed. With a subtle lift of his eyes, he marvels at the delicate skin of the boy's slender yet long arms and the shifting muscles underneath it as this young creature reaches for the napkin Hannibal feels he offered centuries ago.

And with both warmth and electricity the older man feels when their fingertips touch for the briefest of moments, with the soft smile on the boy's face regarding him, with the long eyelashes falling down on both cheeks only to touch the dark brows a second later, revealing mesmerizingly blue eyes—with all of these things, Hannibal feels as though something both physically and metaphorically stung him in the middle of his heart. And it's been the first time Hannibal genuinely, truly felt something since so long he can't even remember the last time of it happening.

"Thank you," the words spoken by this soft and boyishly coy voice feel like melting honey in Hannibal's ears, and a subtle smile once again adorns this boy's angelic face.

Sparks coming from their touch still seem to go down Hannibal's spine as he watches the young boy leaving from his side and approaching some other table, fecklessly wiping the stain off his white buttoned shirt.

Hannibal forgot about the Caravaggio's work long ago as now his thoughts are occupied by only one boy—by art in its purest and most sublime form. Only when he sees a woman approaching this ethereal creature, he reminds himself to eventually breath in a proper way, feeling as though he just experienced true ecstasy.

The woman tilts her head as she talks to the boy, despite him being a few inches taller than her, and strokes his back gently—a protective gesture as if she wanted to separate him from the atrociousness of arbitrary restaurant accidents. Her sleeveless dress fits perfectly to her body, emphasizing slender and flawless silhouette, and it matches with her headband, both made of the same blue and white houndstooth fabric. With white low heel but still elegant shoes and small white purse she looks as though she just stepped off the pages of the newest fashion magazine.

Not long Hannibal has to wait to see her politely yet rigidly telling off the unfortunate waitress, and then she puts some coins on the table she and the boy were supposedly sitting at by the time of the accident. It takes only a moment before the two of them leave the restaurant, the stern look on the woman's face softens slightly and just before they get into a white Ford Galaxie, Hannibal is able to see the resemblance to the boy in her facial features.

And not a minute after that, Hannibal is already in his car, paying for the hideous coffee as he left the restaurant, not bothering to add some tip—his politeness isn't illimitable after all. He manages to start the vehicle what it seems a second before the white car disappears from the parking lot.

Hannibal doesn't make spontaneous and thoughtless decisions.

And yet, he finds himself driving his Bentley and undoubtedly following these woman and boy just after seeing them for mere two or three minutes altogether. He didn't plan any of this but the thought of never seeing that enthralling young creature again makes him anxious as if he was about to lose the finest piece of art forever.

So he drives further and further, the overpowering desire to lay his eyes on that boy for at least one more time being the sole reason why he still hasn't forgone.

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